

**Gift suggestions:** Books made for browsing for gifts whether they read or not

**It's final:** Mark Jimenez arrives tonight



**ConCom ends work,** submits Charter proposals to GMA

**RP rules out opening** of agri market further at WTO meeting in HK

**Greenies list practical tips for eco-friendly holidays**

**By Julie M. Aurelio**  
 MAKE THIS CHRISTMAS a seasonal joy and fun. While gifts are a must, here are some tips to make your holidays greener. (By the way, it's not too late to get a head start on your shopping.)

www.inquirer.net

PHILIPPINEDAILY  
**INQUIRER**  
 BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

**KC 'returns' for opening of grief healing center**

**By Cynthia G. Bascos**  
 A BIG BROWN BUTTERFLY, CALLED BY others, Indians that helped with a big bang. There are many of the various symbols that marked yesterday's groundbreaking ceremony for the establishment of the first grief healing center in the Philippines.

www.inquirer.net

# Abat et al. free on bail

## DOJ defends cops making fools of themselves

**By Joaquin G. Bernas, SJ.**

I AM NO MEMBER OF EITHER GOV. Duterte's staff, but I do not like, even if former President Fidel Ramos and Abat had it coming. This police had all the time in the world to arrest the suspects and would probably have gotten it. Abat was just about to jump into a car to flee a fleeing suspect in Mindanao via Hong Kong, London and Singapore. But the police chose instead to stall their confidence and a "no-hunt" order—just like the video made by my brother-in-law, with the difference that my brother was just having a look while the police were making fools of themselves.

www.inquirer.net

## Pinoys want chief justice with brains, says survey

**By GRC Cabacungan Jr.**

MOST PINOYS THINK THE justice system is slow and inefficient and that the chief justice is not doing his job. A survey by the GRC shows that 70 percent of respondents want a chief justice with brains, according to a survey report from the GRC/World Bank. It says that as the government, the judiciary is still slow and inefficient and economic growth picked "knowledge of the law" as the most important factor in picking a chief justice.

www.inquirer.net



**GLAD TIMES:** It's that time of year again when the Malacañan Palace is lit up for Christmas Eve. Though a tradition, the Malacañan Palace is lit up for Christmas Eve, though they are open for the first time as though we're hearing the Good News for the first time that Jesus Christ was born in a manger and brought joy to the world.

## Charges filed vs 4 for inciting to sedition

**By Jorge A. del Puerto and Benard M. Navarro**

A HIGH-SPEED FOR-wards Abat walked out of the San Juan Metropolitan Trial Court after posting bail late yesterday afternoon.

Abat and three other leaders of the "revolutionary justice movement"—former Judge Secretary Eduardo Llanes, former Undersecretary for Defense and Army Carlos Berio—each posted bail of P12,000 and were given their release orders at around 5 p.m.

Earlier yesterday, Justice Secretary Estanislao Velasco filed an indictment to warrant charges against the four leaders of the "revolutionary justice movement" for inciting to sedition against the government. The Department of Justice said that the four leaders of the "revolutionary justice movement" are now in the hands of the law and will be charged with sedition against the government. The Department of Justice said that the four leaders of the "revolutionary justice movement" are now in the hands of the law and will be charged with sedition against the government.

## Hubert loses appeal; Webbs are enraged

**By Arnold H. Novato**

THE COURT OF APPEALS yesterday denied the hopes of the leaders of Hubert Webb and his others charged in the "Madrone Mission" when it upheld the conviction after reviewing the evidence.

Special Prosecutor Jonathan Webb, who led the prosecution team, said the decision was "not just a loss" but that the decision would still be a reason for the prosecution to continue with the appeal.

Webb's prosecution team said the decision was "not just a loss" but that the decision would still be a reason for the prosecution to continue with the appeal.

The 16-page decision, passed by Justice Secretary Velasco, said that the four leaders of the "revolutionary justice movement" are now in the hands of the law and will be charged with sedition against the government.



**MAN WITH THE GOLDEN ARM:** Mark Yabuta of Norwalk, South Carolina, crosses the finish line in the 1,200-meter race during the country's first golden arm race. (By the way, it's not too late to get a head start on your shopping.)

## Nora seeks rehab to beat drug charge in LA

LOS ANGELES—FEDERAL SUPREMACY, who was arrested in Los Angeles in March this year for narcotics possession, has asked to enter a drug rehabilitation program to avoid the charge, prosecutors said on Thursday.

Prosecutors said that the defendant, who was arrested in Los Angeles in March this year for narcotics possession, has asked to enter a drug rehabilitation program to avoid the charge, prosecutors said on Thursday.

The 16-page decision, passed by Justice Secretary Velasco, said that the four leaders of the "revolutionary justice movement" are now in the hands of the law and will be charged with sedition against the government.

The 16-page decision, passed by Justice Secretary Velasco, said that the four leaders of the "revolutionary justice movement" are now in the hands of the law and will be charged with sedition against the government.

The 16-page decision, passed by Justice Secretary Velasco, said that the four leaders of the "revolutionary justice movement" are now in the hands of the law and will be charged with sedition against the government.

## Another December, another funeral wake

**By Edson C. Tordes Jr.**

ANOTHER DECEMBER, ANOTHER wake. Another gathering of people to mourn the loss of a loved one.

When the jailed Velasco was also allowed temporary liberty by the Sandiganbayan, he was not just a man in his own right but a man in the hands of the law.



**POKER:** President Velasco looks down during the funeral wake for his late brother Antonio Velasco at the Sacramento de San Juan in Cavite, San Juan, or Pinar.



## SPORTS

Read your favorite sports news and sports news on the Internet at [www.inquirer.com/sports](http://www.inquirer.com/sports)

E-mail: [pr\\_sports@inquirer.com.ph](mailto:pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph)

Editor: Roderick S. Melendres

## Key meeting for Wizards, Jewels today

MENTAL PREPARATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS FOR THE WIZARDS AND JEWELS.

"We have a mental game, it's not just about skills," said Head Coach, who began leading the Wizards to the top of the league last year. "We have a mental game, it's not just about skills." said Head Coach, who began leading the Wizards to the top of the league last year. "We have a mental game, it's not just about skills."

The Wizards are coming off a 100-90 triumph over the Miami Heat which forced them to play a big game after a long layoff.

STANDINGS	W	L
Wizards	10	1
Heat	8	3
Knicks	7	4
76ers	6	5
Wizards	5	6
Heat	4	7
Knicks	3	8
76ers	2	9
Wizards	1	10

**WIZARDS**  
The Wizards are coming off a 100-90 triumph over the Miami Heat which forced them to play a big game after a long layoff.

Head Coach, who began leading the Wizards to the top of the league last year.

"It's going to be tough against the Wizards," said Head Coach, who began leading the Wizards to the top of the league last year. "It's going to be tough against the Wizards."

Last Sunday's game was a 100-90 triumph over the Miami Heat which forced them to play a big game after a long layoff.

Head Coach, who began leading the Wizards to the top of the league last year.



COCA-COLA CHAMPIONSHIP: The Wizards' key player, Scottie Pippen, is seen in action during the game of the Wizards' victory over the Miami Heat.

## Express tame Tigers, gain share of 4th

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

WIZARDS' KEY PLAYER: SCOTTIE PIPPEN

### Reaching out to fans

The Philadelphia 76ers are looking to build a strong fan base by offering a variety of services to their fans. The team is offering a variety of services to their fans, including a variety of services to their fans.

### Reaching out to fans

The Philadelphia 76ers are looking to build a strong fan base by offering a variety of services to their fans. The team is offering a variety of services to their fans, including a variety of services to their fans.

The Philadelphia 76ers are looking to build a strong fan base by offering a variety of services to their fans. The team is offering a variety of services to their fans, including a variety of services to their fans.











# BI agents raid 'tiangges' run by Sino illegals

By Leticia B. Salazar

ACTION ON COMPLAINTS OF PHILIPPINE retailers complaining about being cut in "alien" businesses, the Bureau of Immigration has begun a crackdown on illegal foreign vendors at the height of the Christmas shopping frenzy.

The BI swooped down on the Baclaran mall in Pasay and the 15th mall in Divisoria and arrested more than 150 Chinese nationals engaged in the retail business in separate raids on Wednesday and Thursday.

The two malls are highly popular among shoppers because they sell a lot of cheap imports whose prices can be brought down lower still through bargaining.

"This should serve as a warning to them for this is just the start of a continuing crackdown to flush out these illegal aliens who openly violate our laws at the expense of our small Filipino retailers," said BI Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. in a statement.

Of those detained, 103 were arrested in

Baclaran while 50 were operating in Manila.

Some of those taken last Sunday were over-staying visitors. The others had valid visas and had proper documents.

Archie Santos, who heads the BI task force against illegal foreign vendors, said even those who had documents allowing them to stay in the country were liable for violating immigration laws by engaging in the retail business.

"Except for large retail enterprises or joint ventures that are highly capitalized, the law strictly forbids foreigners from engaging in the retail business as it is exclusively reserved to Filipinos," Santos said.

The arrested foreigners would be charged with "indebitability," while those with expired travel documents would face additional charges for overstaying, he said.

The Bureau has initiated deportation proceedings against the foreigners but most of the foreigners were allowed to post bail on Btms-Btms bonds, Fernandez said.



HUNDREDS of bargain-hunting shoppers crowd the "tiangge" at the 15th mall in Divisoria, Manila.

PHOTO

## Panasonic

ideas for life



## Brilliant beauty

True  
idea

Digital AI Naturalizer produces brighter and natural-looking colours. 5-Band Equalizer provides personalized viewing enjoyment with up to five pre-set sound settings. Virtual Hyper Bass (VHB) Circuit creates fine-performance quality sounds.

### DIGITAL AI NATURALIZER



CONVENTIONAL DIGITAL AI

- True-Type Stereo Speakers
- Virtual Hyper Bass (VHB)
- Shockless Motion

### 5-BAND EQUALIZER



- Multi-Language SARCOS Menu
- Make-Up Time
- Child Lock

The PCTV



50" P50UT1  
57" P50UT1



50" P50UT1  
57" P50UT1



50" P50UT1  
57" P50UT1

## JDV wants Garci probe terminated

By Christina D. Williams

**SPREAD JOBS OF VIOLENCE TESTIFIED**  
asked the five candidates investigating the "Yellow Card" kidnapping and showed broad support to continue their hearings and submit a collective report to the commission of the entire House of Representatives.

"We are praying that the hearings will come to an end," the Newman said. "There no longer be pages to images, or other content to say they are (C) too much, the people are very mad and irritated because nothing substantial has come out of it."

He said he was not trying to influence the

continue to stop its investigation but was merely making an appeal to enable the country to move forward.

The House investigation, which is in aid of legislation, has suggested focus on the question of whether Giuliani, indeed, was one of the reasons for most of the circumstances that were a leading factor in the disclosure of the "Libby Gate" saga.

On March 21, the House investigation was going nowhere, and it was time to turn to the business and senior the industry.

"We need better elections," commented the gun families, who had expressly denied the President's involvement in the alleged bribery deal.

"We're just hoping that the fire administration will just terminate the hearings and submit the report to the House of Representatives as we call it more so," he said. "We have to go."

The next Congress also had to legislate reforms needed by the country including amending the Constitution.

But in the House, Majority Leader "Buck" Latta said the Department of Foreign Affairs should ask Congress to pressure "Mexico, contrary to" by its diplomatic note claiming that Cardenas was in the city since last July.

Larkin, one of the chairs of the House inquiry into the "Mafia Wars" tapes, said they would urge the DEA to ask for the documents after the department said it was standing by Singapore's report even though Carillianni's old cell now contains almost nothing but books.

"We will write the letter to every political party in Singapore for the basis of its own debate," he said.

He said the documents could include the arrest and detention records of Chamillos, who allegedly arrived in Singapore on July 14.

## AFP report on Garci misses deadline anew

A MILDRED INMAN IDENTIFIED the alleged ownership of four grounds as the "Holla Care" site. The last of her reports was in 1980. Public

The report is finished but the board's five members will have to

The APF Inspector General, Mr. John Matusky, had said the Coast would submit its findings by Jan. 15, before setting that new deadline.

Allegedly, after breaching the probe, and after the board would submit the results of its last finding, either late in October or early November.

ed himself to try to submit before the end of the season.

key members of the  
May Clinic. Ward Polster,  
Ramon Alamillo, Com-  
mille Manning and Col-  
ynah.

...a number of officers to go six months home or under orders, the president in the alleged closing were frustrated.

Chief Li. Gen. (sup)  
any chief Li. Gen. (sup)  
any chief Li. Gen. (sup)

## CHEd's lament: Solons lawyering for diploma mills

#### The Director's Power

THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION (CBE) said yesterday it would continue to crack down on substandard schools and complained it was being pressured by members of Congress to lift its restrictions on the opening of new schools, particularly nursing schools.

U.S. Education Secretary William J. Bennett told a press conference the agency had imposed the restrictions in light of the decline in the quality of education in newly opened institutions, especially nursing schools. Besides, he said, there "are already too state

"We are being pressured by congressmen to kill the motivation," Paine said. He declined to identify any of them but said O'Neil "would try even hard to boost the product" and increase the problems on the so-called diploma.

"This January, we will be coming off them again. It's a hard job but someone has to do it," he said.

---

[illegible]

**INSTANT CASH!!!**

**Robinson Bank**  
A Division of

*Jewelry Loan*

We accept **WARRANTY & GOLD JEWELRY** loans  
 For your **BUSINESS** or **PERSONAL NEEDS**  
 From just **\$1,000 to \$25,000** at **Very Low Interest Rates**

Visit us at [www.robsonbank.com](http://www.robsonbank.com)  
 or call **800-888-8888** for more information

For more information on Robinson Bank's services, visit us at [www.robsonbank.com](http://www.robsonbank.com)  
 or call **800-888-8888** for more information

Don't make this chance to own a new home this Christmas!  
Due to insistent Public Demand we are bringing back...

# GRAND VIEWING DAY! 2

Now you can see inside with us Sunday December 14th at 10:00am or Monday, December 15th at 10:00am the each location of 1st try viewing. This chance is yours for the first time, and it's yours to see.

For just **P5,147/month\***



**SPAIN BERNARDO**  
The Art of Quality Living

Chamorro Street, Marikina Branch, Marikina City  
also at Marikina City, also at Marikina City

Don't miss this chance to see the 1st try viewing. This chance is yours for the first time, and it's yours to see.

1st try of Chamorro Street, Marikina City

**PHINMA**  
INCORPORATED IN PHILIPPINES

**City Living Made Easy**

Tel. No. 813-8888 (7/24)  
TEXT: 813-8888 (7/24) or 813-8888 (7/24)

Website: [www.phinma.com.ph](http://www.phinma.com.ph)

**Call us**  
Lead Marketing, Agents  
Chamorro Street, Marikina City  
Chamorro Street, Marikina City

\*See a 30-day money-back guarantee. See a 30-day money-back guarantee. See a 30-day money-back guarantee.


**Republic of the Philippines**  
**SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM**

## CIRCULAR NO. 24 - P

**TO : ALL SSS MEMBERS**

---

**SUBJECT : MONITORING PROGRAM IN THE PAYMENT OF MEMBER LOANS**

Forwarded to Social Security Commission (SSC), Resolutions No. 89-A-2005 dated 21 February 2005, which was approved by the President of the Philippines on 13 April 2005, regarding the guidelines for the monitoring program on member loans.

**WIND AND QUALITY OF THE MONITORING PROGRAM**

Members who existing still to be in active status, currently undergoing educational study may pay their installment term(s) OR start payments, privatization fund and other financing from SSS/SLM Corporation Housing, SSS Employees Housing, SSS NIA Acquisition/Condominium, SSS Acquired houses where residence or place of work is properly located (or housing loan is located in the following selected vicinity areas).

**Typhoon "Uduy"** – Oriental Mindoro, Occidental Mindoro, Cebu, Palawan, Iloilo, Aklan

**Typhoon "Minat"** – Marikina, Baguio, Basil, Region IV, Agila Sub-Province, Nueva Ecija, Bataan, Oriental Mindoro, Western Samar, Eastern Samar

**Typhoon "Hoping"** – La Union, Pangasinan, Negros Occidental, Region Division (Iwahig, Zamboanga, Surigao, Victoria, Tuguegarao City, Cagayan, San Carlos City, Isabela, Cebu, Iloilo, Zamboanga, Davao, Cagayan, Sta. Pauline, Cagayan

**WHAT ARE THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS:**

- Monitoring period is from 31 December 2004 to 31 May 2005;
- Deadline for filing of application is on 20 December 2005;
- Penalties shall not be imposed on complainant membership due during the monitoring period referred to accreditation for the applicable period November 2004 to April 2005;
- The cost of the loan will be deducted up to 5% monthly;

Any unpaid loan re-accreditation during the monitoring period shall be re-accredited starting June 2005 up to the end of the extended term of the loan.

In delinquent accounts, the outstanding loan balance as of 30 November 2004 consisting of (a) past due principal, interest and penalty; and (b) remaining proceeds of pre-paid shall be re-accredited over the extended term.

A short-term interest-free loan for members upon full payment but not more than the original term of the loan.

**SUBJECT AREA ON THE MONITORING PROGRAMS**

- Member shall Accrue the Application for Monitoring Program when are located at the nearest SSS Office and verify documents from the SSS website;
- Member shall submit the application form at the nearest SSS Office with any of the following applicable documents:

- a) **Employer Certification** certifying that the member was employed by the company located in the selected vicinity area during the liability period;
- b) **Borrowing Certification** certifying that the member is a borrower-owner of property located in the selected vicinity area;

Please be gentle accordingly.

  
**EDGARDO S. DELA PAZ**  
 President, Chief Executive Officer

Address: SSS Main Building, East Avenue, Alabang, Muntinlupa City  
 Tel. Nos. (02) (02 664-61) / (02) (02 664-62) to 63  
 E-mail: [member\\_services@sss.gov.ph](mailto:member_services@sss.gov.ph) / Web Site: <http://www.sss.gov.ph>

**NOW IN THE PHILIPPINES!**



*Imagine the power of digital video  
in its most effortless, elegant form.*

How you can harness the power of moving images is as medium as you as a content and nearly three times larger than the biggest plasma television! Embodied with optical polymers, HoloMedia's ultra-thin rear-projector format captures picturelight and projects it evenly to deliver stunning, high-resolution images even in bright lighting. Superior eye-to-eye or hi-angle viewing is guaranteed. You're watching "floating" images at the point-of-sale. HoloMedia™ is your most dynamic, digital marketing solution.

13 inch diagonal, diagonal view from 80 to 130 inches

**airmedia**  
HOLOMEDIA<sup>TM</sup> LITHIA

Everything else is just information

Call 716.656.04 to 85  
[www.airmedia.com.ph](http://www.airmedia.com.ph)





"THAT'S MY ANGEL," recalls Sina de Venecia: the sight of a big, brown butterfly that settles on the forehead of President Arroyo during RC de Venecia's final death anniversary.

## KC returns for opening of grief healing center

By Benigno Aquino III

My return to Angeles, the place where I met the first death anniversary of RC de Venecia, the youngest of two children of Speaker Jose de Venecia and wife Clara, who was killed in a fire that gutted their house in (Bakel) City in December last year.

President Benigno Aquino III himself witnessed the "sign" indicating that RC was all over the place, and expressed his support of her parents' establishment of the late (Tony) Naudin to Angel Grief Healing Center, a two-story building which will be constructed in a sprawling 1,000-square-meter area of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

In one place during the time, the table with the butterfly-shaped candles RC is supposed to RC and the other dead children of the center's organizers suddenly burst into flames.

### That's KC

"Oh, that's KC," Clara told her husband, clearing a road from his house, who also felt her son-like to be a different man now.

In the case of the project for the grand opening, a big bang was heard, caused by the explosion of one of the balloons near the President.

"That's KC again," he repeated to me and, clearing a chuckle from the President.

When the people who gathered were told to go to the hundreds of butterflies, a big house was located in the President's right hand and moved there for the duration of the ceremony which lasted for 30 minutes.

### Butterfly goes to Palace

The national butterfly trial several times to be go of the butterfly to be used.

"KC was very much with us today," she said, as she showed me the butterfly in her hand.

"That's my angel," Clara repeated.

This butterfly did not have the President's hand for a while to take it with her when she returned to the butterfly.

"That is KC. Oh, what a sight. KC really loved butterflies. She

loved to butterfly when she was still alive," a tear-eyed but beaming De Venecia proudly told her family.

### Endless pain

Although they believe that RC is now at peace, both the Speaker and his wife admitted that the pain of losing their only daughter will never go away.

But, much, the couple will leave for the United States in April to spend Christmas there.

Inspired by Clara's own story of survival, the two centers hope in being together to help mothers in their struggle with an unending and to prevent public opinion from changing.

Asked about the center's name, Clara said they did not want to be granted the grieving father.

"In our maternal center, the mother is the center of the family for the rest of the world. It is not just a grief but a healing place. That is why it is important to have a good place for mothers," she said.

### Architect free of charge

The center was designed by an accomplished architect, San Lázaro, free of charge. Clara and all those who will work in the center will be in volunteer.

The center seeks to provide professional support to all bereaved mothers through programs and projects that will enable them to move on. In the center, counseling will lead the psychologists who will provide grief counseling.

He made sure that the center will respond to the need, as he himself said he accepted financial support from government and private sector to give up a portion of their good heart for the center. He also admitted that he had not been a doctor for a long time as a result of KC's death.

### Local governments

Acting Social Welfare Secretary Lucinda Pido had adopted the two butterfly while (GARD) the democracy that was coordinating with local government units to design counseling programs to guide the members of the family in handling their losses.

WOMEN WEAR THE FACE OF DEATH in solidarity for the World Trade Organization dominated by first world countries meeting in Hong Kong, like people in developing countries like the Philippines government









# The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Soley

## EU solons to start CIA prisons inquiry

STRASBOURG, FRANCE—THE EUROPEAN Parliament decided on Thursday to investigate allegations that the CIA used European states to transport and detain terrorism suspects illegally.

The US Central Intelligence Agency is alleged to be operating secret jails in Europe and to have secretly flying prisoners through airports in Italy, Germany and elsewhere.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has said the United States respects the sovereignty of

European countries in its fight against terrorism, but this would not conflict or deny specific reports of CIA secret prisons in Europe.

"The European Parliament is aware and determined about getting at the truth regarding extraordinary rendition through

an investigating committee," British Liberal Democrat Baroness Smith said in a speech.

She said that "if necessary" the committee would also launch the European Union's own investigation against member states "which have secretly housed terrorists."

Under the EU's ruling treaties, EU states have a duty to protect human rights breaches from their voting rights in the bloc's powerful Council of Ministers where governments meet.

Leaders of the political group

in the assembly decided late on Wednesday to set up a temporary committee of inquiry whose members and composition will be decided next month.

Committee-approved resolutions expressing concern about the "potential use of European countries by the CIA for the transportation and illegal detention of prisoners."

The resolution, which also called for an investigation into the allegations, was passed with 330 votes in favor, 137 against and 32 abstentions.

Earlier this week, the top EU justice official urged lawmakers to wait until Europe's long-running rights watchdog, the Council of Europe, completed its inquiry early next year before probing ahead with their own probe.

EU Justice and Security Commissioner Franco Frattini and other lawmakers were asked to confirm the allegations, apparently contradicting the Council of Europe's position.

Frattini said, but Mario Monti, who was asked to lead the Council of Europe, has said that

information gathered so far had confirmed the credibility of the allegations.

Frattini said he would fully support the Council of Europe probe by providing sensitive information and facilitating investigations.

But Monti said he should be more active in pushing for a full-scale EU investigation of the charges of illegal prisons, and urged him to use his close ties with EU governments and officials to help the assembly's investigation, which will have limited powers. Reuters

## White House backs down over torture ban

WASHINGTON—SAYED AN INTERNATIONAL treaty that US administration officials, President George W. Bush on Thursday agreed to have the terms of prisoners held by the United States anywhere in the world.

The White House had earlier denied in a letter to Congress its intention to sign the Convention Against Torture, which would ban the use of torture by US officials.

But the White House has now backing down because of concerns over the US image in the world following reports of secret CIA prisons in Europe and elsewhere.

During a White House press conference with McCain to announce the accord, Bush stressed that there would be "protections" for US troops in the legislation.

He said the White House and McCain have the common aim "to make it clear to the world that this government does not commit and that we refuse to be instrumental in perpetrating of torture, whether it be in a home or abroad."

"And we have worked very closely with the Senate and others to achieve that objective, as well as to provide protections for those who are on the front lines of fighting the war on terror."

"We've sent a message to the world that the United States is not like the apartheid," McCain said.

"We have no goal for death, but what we are is a nation that upholds values and standards of behavior and treatment of all people, no matter how evil or bad they are. And I think this will help us enormously in winning the war for the hearts and minds of people throughout the world in the long run."

The White House had originally threatened to veto the whole defense bill going through Congress if it included the language proposed by McCain. It also said the President John McCain supported in Republican caucus for backing.

But the Senate version, which largely built on the Republican presidential nomination in 2000, reduced some White House pressure during several weeks of talks with historic on early action by McCain.

## China reports another human bird flu case

BEIJING—A THIRD PERSON IN CHINA (AP) became infected with the potentially fatal bird flu virus, the Ministry of Health said on Thursday.

The latest victim is a 32-year-old man in Guangdong, County of Jiangmen Prefecture, near China, the official Xinhua news agency reported. The World Health Organization (WHO) said it was aware of the case.

"We are currently in critical condition in hospital," WHO spokeswoman Maria Ching said.

"Our office in Beijing was informed of this today. It is a premature that hasn't identified human cases before but it is somebody who seems to have a history of exposure to poultry," Ching added from the WHO's Geneva headquarters.

The WHO had this week confirmed its preliminary report that the killed 71 people in the region out of a total of 139 known human cases since 2003.

WHO remains hard to transmit to each other, but there are fears it could become fatal to a human case once only from person, spreading an influenza pandemic to which millions could die.

Xinhua said the patient was confirmed to have died on Dec. 4, a week after symptoms of pneumonia, it described him as a public.

Earlier on Thursday the Ministry of Agriculture said a previous flu case had been confirmed in Guo's village after the death of 1,000 ducks raised by a fellow villager, Xinhua reported.

The provincial veterinarian department reported (SAP) was the killer and a preliminary laboratory confirmed the suspicion on Thursday the ministry said. Reuters

# S. Korea cloning pioneer accused of faking research

SEOUL—SOUTH KOREAN CLONING pioneer Hwang Woo-suk, on Friday, denied fabricating his part of his husband's controversial and now banned work on cloning human embryos.

Caught and trembling, Hwang, 32, said a highly respected fellow-scientist told him he had faked the research after answering questions at a press conference.

Hwang said in the study he had cloned 11 human embryos and collected patient-specific stem cells from them, a major breakthrough in therapeutic stem cell research.

"What I can say clearly is that we have produced patient-specific stem cells and we have the technology to clone," he told reporters.

Allegations made Thursday by a South Korean colleague that Hwang had faked the findings stunned South Koreans. Other scientists have also questioned Hwang's research, including respected U.S. researcher Gerald Schatten at the University of Pittsburgh, a new study published.

On Thursday, both Hwang, a fertility expert who co-authored Hwang's

work published by Science, accused his colleague of fabrication.

In media interviews, both said at least nine out of the 11 stem-cell lines were faked.

"Of the 11 stem cell lines, at least nine are faked and the veracity of the ten otherwise set to be confirmed," he said.

Stem cells are master cells that reprogram any one day help fight cancer and other hard-to-cure diseases like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and diabetes.

Though Hwang stood by his research, he said that there were "irreversible mistakes in the photographs" that accompanied the research paper.

"I expected that Science magazine retract the research paper after getting evidence from other co-authors," he told reporters.

Hwang said that of the 11 original stem cell lines, six had perished due to contamination and five others were frozen but were being thawed and tested within his findings when asked within 10 days.

He added that he would take written questions by press conference to determine whether any wrongdoing took place in his research.

Many South Koreans were shocked by the fall from grace of Hwang, a national hero and symbol of the nation's reborn progress.

Allegations were compounded by an anti-party Cabinet meeting early Friday to discuss the scandal, while biomedical and pharmaceutical shares took a nosedive along with South Korea's hopes of maintaining a global edge in stem cell research.

"Today is a day of national tragedy," said Lee Hong-jai, a professor at Seoul National University who has been upbraided a number of times by the government for his criticism of Hwang's research.

Hwang had stunned the world several times in recent years with his groundbreaking work that included cloning of the first human embryos to produce stem cells in 2004.

His breakthrough research on stem cell lines published in June this year was followed by the birth of the first cloned dog, Trappy, in August.

However, last month Hwang admitted using human eggs donated by female medical students, violating internationally accepted standards.

The credibility of his work was hit

or challenged by South Korea's MBF network, which said the stem cells did not match those cells and their photographs illustrating Hwang's research to Science had been faked.

A junior researcher reportedly said Hwang had ordered him to doctor photographs of two stem cell lines so they would appear to show 11 lines.

AP/WIDEWORLD

# Study: US graduates' literacy falls significantly

THE NATIONAL AVERAGE COLLEGE graduate's literacy in English declined significantly over the past decade, according to results of a nationwide test to be released Friday.

The National Assessment of Adult Literacy, given in 2003 by the Department of Education, is the nation's most important test of how well adults Americans can read.

The test, also based largely on declines in the literacy of Hispanics in the United States, and significant to research among blacks and Asians.

When the test was last administered, in 1992, 40 percent of the nation's college graduates scored at the proficient level, meaning that they were able to read lengthy, complex English texts and draw complicated inferences. But on the 2003 test, only 31 percent of the graduates demonstrated those high-level skills. There were 26.4 million college graduates.

The college graduates who in 2003 failed to demonstrate proficiency included 33 percent who scored at the intermediate level and 14 percent who scored at the basic level, meaning they could read and understand short, commonplace prose texts.

Three percent of college graduates in 2003, representing some 400,000 Americans, demonstrated "below basic" literacy, meaning that they could not perform better than the simplest skills, like locating very identifiable information in short prose.

Conor J. Whelan, director of an institute within the Department of Education that helped to oversee the test, said he believed the literacy of college graduates has dropped because rising numbers of young Americans in recent years have spent their free time watching television and surfing the Internet.

"We're seeing substantial declines in reading for pleasure, and it's showing up

in our books," he said. The study found that 11 million Americans test below.

Among blacks and Asians, English literacy increased from 1992 to 2003.

About 29 percent of blacks scored at either the intermediate or proficient levels in 1992, but in 2003, those rates to 33 percent. The percentages of blacks demonstrating "below basic" literacy declined from 24 percent to 21 percent.

Asian scoring at either the intermediate or proficient levels rose from 47 percent in 1992 to 54 percent.

The same pattern was big declines in Hispanics' English reading skills. In 1992, 35 percent of Hispanics demonstrated "below basic" English literacy, but by 2003 that number had climbed to 44 percent. And at the higher-performing end of the literacy scale, the proportion of Hispanics demonstrating intermediate or proficient English skills dropped from 33 percent in 1992 to 27 percent. New York Times Times Herald

















## Across the NATION

# NPA land mine kills Army major, lieutenant

EDMUNDSON CITY—AT LEAST seven soldiers, including a major and lieutenant, were killed in a land mine explosion set off by a reconnaissance vehicle in the town, North Carolina, on Friday morning, the military said.

Col. Rupert Pollock, com-

mander of the Army's 101st Infantry Brigade based in Camden town, said troops from the Army's 3rd Infantry Brigade were on their way to a military exercise when one of their vehicles hit a land mine in Eden, just 10 miles from the town.

The explosion tore at a vehicle and took it by the explosion, according to Pollock.

He did not give further details regarding the location of the explosion.

At least seven others have been wounded, according to another report reaching the military's

Headquarters Command.

Pollock said the New People's Army's use of land mines is a violation of international protocols on war.

But the United States government has maintained that it uses a type of land mine that does not violate human rights and inter-

national humanitarian conventions.

In an earlier press statement, the Pentagon spokesman of the National Intelligence Council (NIC) in Washington, said the NIC is using command-detonated land mines which will

only explode when operated by a combatant.

The United States in 1996 has banned the use of this type of weaponry because it kills people even after they have ceased.

Jeffrey Zipes and Ryan Brown, NIC officials in















## WHAT'S INSIDE

**URC to raise P1.3B from sale of 635M shares** | **Peso breaks holiday rally, ends at 53.45** | **2005**

# BUSINESS

Put us your feedback inquiries for next-day coverage in 2005 (Volume 382) (Cover)

Read us: [business@inquirer.com.ph](mailto:business@inquirer.com.ph)  
Web site: [www.inquirer.com.ph](http://www.inquirer.com.ph)

Editor: Raul G. Maras  
Assistant Editor: Conita S. Mariano

## National government outbidding debt

September 2004 and 2005 (in billion pesos)



SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY

## November budget gap exceeds P4.5-B ceiling

By Michelle V. Rana

THE BUDGET IMPACT OF THE national government for P7.3 billion last November, exceeding the ceiling set for the month but still providing a budget gap for the full year may be the 2005 gold.

The government spent P79.4 billion in November but collected only P72.9 billion in revenues.

The November deficit was P26.5 billion higher than the P4.3-billion pre-budgeted deficit for the month.

Fiscal authorities said the government could afford to be more flexible in its spending in the last quarter given the slow recovery in its own performance as the budget position that month is in the red.

The latest deficit figure brought the budget gap for the January to November period to P122.8 billion, well P27.7 billion below the P150.5-billion ceiling.

The 11-month deficit reached new P104.5 billion mark as of November and P73.7 billion worth of revenue collection.

"With the November data, the emerging deficit for the full year is between P100 billion and P110 billion, far down to all the likely level that we could do better than that," National Treasurer Cesar Cruz said in a briefing yesterday at the House of Representatives.

The Treasury's forecast for the full year deficit was P75 billion to P20 billion, lower than the P130 billion ceiling set in the 2005 Official and the expected over-performance of the final year that year was seen to ensure the maximum for an improved income tax revenue next year, if not better, would outweigh the Philippines.

The extent of government spending for the month exceeded the P75.4-billion ceiling, Cruz said, as the system incurred higher operating expenses, and as the government served more direct payments and labor for the unemployment program.

"We had not to control spending to produce pay-per-unit, as in the case of the unemployment program," Cruz said.

# Gov't debt burden rose to P4.02T in September

## As fiscal deficits persist

By Michelle V. Rana

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT'S debt reached P4.02 trillion as of September this year, up by 2 percent from the previous month's level due to additional borrowings to finance spending that could not be covered by insufficient revenues.

The government's debt level would continue to rise as long as it has a budget deficit to cover. In the case of the Philippines, the budget deficit is seen to expand between P1.6 billion and P100 billion this year, but fiscal authorities are targeting to wipe out the deficit by 2008 and put a surplus by 2009.

The P4.02 trillion debt, if annualized, would amount to P45.2 million Filipinos, which means that each would have a share of P45, 200

to be national government's liabilities.

Debtors from the Bureau of Treasury showed that the P4.02 trillion debt as of September, P1.87 trillion, or 47 percent, was used to finance external while P2.15 trillion, or 53 percent, was raised from domestic sources.

The domestic debt of P1.87 trillion in September reflected a 3.8-percent increase from the previous month's level. The increase in domestic debt was mostly accounted for by the rise in issuance of government securities.

The foreign liabilities of P2.15 trillion was 2.1 percent higher than the August level. The Treasury said the amount of foreign debt rose with the financing of P1 billion worth of debt for international bonds to September.

But the Treasury said the increase in foreign debt was partly offset by the appreciation of the peso against the US dollar and other foreign currencies. The Treasury added that the strengthening of the peso reduced the government's foreign obligations by P1.6 billion.

(DPI-11)

## FIRST 11 MONTHS BOP surplus hits \$2.16B

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES ENJOYED A billion-dollar payments deficit for the second straight month in November due to debt servicing, but a surplus of P1.16 billion was left for the 11-month period owing to stronger foreign exchange helped by earlier this year.

The Foreign Service in Philippine recorded that for November alone, the BOP had a surplus of \$200 million, although the

was still an improvement from the deficit of \$400 million recorded in October and the \$270-million deficit in the same month last year.

The January to November cumulative surplus of \$2.16 billion was also a sharp improvement from the \$400-million deficit in the same period last year.

"The deficit to the monthly trade balance, notwithstanding, the cumulative BOP surplus

## CURRENCIES



PHILIPINE DOLLAR RATE

USD 1 = PHP 53.45

As of Sept. 30, 2005

USD 1 = PHP 53.45

As of Sept. 30, 2005

USD 1 = PHP 53.45

As of Sept. 30, 2005

USD 1 = PHP 53.45

As of Sept. 30, 2005

USD 1 = PHP 53.45

As of Sept. 30, 2005

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority

PHILIPPINE STOCK MARKET

PHI COMPOSITE INDEX

NOVEMBER DECEMBER



(The stock market report on Page B2)

Stocks fall 1.2%

on crop farmers

ON CROP FARMERS

ON CROP FARMERS

ON CROP FARMERS

ON CROP FARMERS

ON CROP FARMERS

ON CROP FARMERS

ON CROP FARMERS

(DPI-11)







Super! Countdown

8

Super!

Read Super! Countdown p. 8  
 For more details, visit our website at [www.inquirer.com](http://www.inquirer.com)  
 or call (02) 881-8811

Editor: Pam Pineda  
 Creative Director: Tim Yap

style • urban living •

pop culture • entertainment • recreation



Julia Clarete  
 Hollywood  
 bound page C4

Miguel Rosales  
 has a small  
 package page E1

Team Super!  
 loves page D1  
 Team Manila

Artwork by page D4  
 Marcushiro,  
 songs from Outer Hope

Photography  
 DR. HAMILTON PICO  
 Styling: POC, NAPA  
 Hair and makeup:  
 TOTO BONGABONG  
 Cover design: JAMA CLARETE  
 in BORISQUE DE CONF







# Hollywood Dreaming with Julia, not Roberts



**TENTH.** "Preston is a great lady, from a career to (her) brother's songs. It's a pleasure for me to work, imagine her brother's songwriting as he continues as a 17-year-old boy! And this singing is fabulous."

By Albert Pitt

**J**ULIA CLARKE IS GOING TO Hollywood. How about that? Considering that her main motivation for joining the competition reality show, *Hollywood Dream*, was to merely do a motorcycle and just have enough TV exposure to keep herself working, Julia got more than what she bargained for when she actually won.

And so much that she suggestively beautiful as one was a dark horse in a tough playing field that included promising newcomers like Rafael Sanz, comestick young men like Jason Odoms and Justin Barthelemy and veterans like John O'Connell, Picky Amador and award-winning actor Raymond J. Barry—when she beat by just a single vote—she made her victory even sweeter.

"I just want to keep working, that's all," Julia told this writer as the last things demanding were during a break from the show. "There was a time in my career when I wasn't getting work and money would talk to me. It was a terrible feeling that I wouldn't want to go through again. That's why I'm constantly working, very hard on my work. I mean, there's so many things to correct about me as an actress."

Julia's triumph also is Hollywood Dream is not the only Hollywood story worth writing a screenplay about. The life story of this quietly determined girl is inspiring as well. A big fan of John Lennon, she said her name was actually inspired by Julia, "a meeting had from The Beatles' White Album that came down as a tribute to his late mother."

She started her career in the hit hit-to-go show, *Angie* TV. Small roles in movies and the legitimate stage followed, which her love for music also eventually found her singing in lounge bars. But it was a lead role in an *ABC* commercial that led to her big break.

"I became a part of *ABC* CBS's *Star Circle* Search 4," she recalls. "But it wasn't until I got the commercial role in the soap opera *So Proudly We Suffer* that I really got noticed."

Facing the upcoming *Shrek*, Julia made life very difficult for *July Ann* Series in the show and as a trade got the thumbs up of the critics and the thumbs down from the fans that hated her character.

"We didn't realize me at all that I was playing the villainous bad girl," she says. "I was really happy to get that role and was really challenged with the character. As for the time being that my friends are there, I didn't mind. I actually found it interesting, in fact. The more people hat-